

Notice of Allowability

Application No.

09/987,465

Examiner

Thomas M. Sember

Applicant(s)

NISHIYAMA ET AL.

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address--

All claims being allowable, PROSECUTION ON THE MERITS IS (OR REMAINS) CLOSED in this application. If not included herewith (or previously mailed), a Notice of Allowance (PTOL-85) or other appropriate communication will be mailed in due course. **THIS NOTICE OF ALLOWABILITY IS NOT A GRANT OF PATENT RIGHTS.** This application is subject to withdrawal from issue at the initiative of the Office or upon petition by the applicant. See 37 CFR 1.313 and MPEP 1308.

1. ☒ This communication is responsive to the I.D.S. filed on 06/08/2005.
2. ☒ The allowed claim(s) is/are 1-23.
3. ☒ The drawings filed on 14 November 2001 are accepted by the Examiner.
4. ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
 - a) ☒ All b) ☐ Some* c) ☐ None of the:
 1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☒ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. 09/449,835.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this national stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* Certified copies not received: _____.

Applicant has THREE MONTHS FROM THE "MAILING DATE" of this communication to file a reply complying with the requirements noted below. Failure to timely comply will result in ABANDONMENT of this application.
THIS THREE-MONTH PERIOD IS NOT EXTENDABLE.

5. ☐ A SUBSTITUTE OATH OR DECLARATION must be submitted. Note the attached EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT or NOTICE OF INFORMAL PATENT APPLICATION (PTO-152) which gives reason(s) why the oath or declaration is deficient.
 6. ☐ CORRECTED DRAWINGS (as "replacement sheets") must be submitted.
 - (a) ☐ including changes required by the Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) attached
 - 1) ☐ hereto or 2) ☐ to Paper No./Mail Date _____.
 - (b) ☐ including changes required by the attached Examiner's Amendment / Comment or in the Office action of Paper No./Mail Date _____.
- Identifying indicia such as the application number (see 37 CFR 1.84(c)) should be written on the drawings in the front (not the back) of each sheet. Replacement sheet(s) should be labeled as such in the header according to 37 CFR 1.121(d).
7. ☐ DEPOSIT OF and/or INFORMATION about the deposit of BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL must be submitted. Note the attached Examiner's comment regarding REQUIREMENT FOR THE DEPOSIT OF BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL.

Attachment(s)

1. ☐ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
2. ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
3. ☒ Information Disclosure Statements (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08),
Paper No./Mail Date 03/01/05
4. ☐ Examiner's Comment Regarding Requirement for Deposit
of Biological Material
5. ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
6. ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413),
Paper No./Mail Date _____.
7. ☐ Examiner's Amendment/Comment
8. ☒ Examiner's Statement of Reasons for Allowance
9. ☐ Other _____.

Thomas M Sember
Primary Examiner
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DETAILED ACTION

Information Disclosure Statement

The information disclosure statement (IDS) submitted on 03/31/05 is in compliance with the provisions of 37 CFR 1.97. Accordingly, the information disclosure statement is being considered by the examiner.

The following is an examiner's statement of reasons for allowance: The I.D.S. statement filed on 03/01/05 was considered by the examiner but neither of the references abstracts teach or fairly suggest applicant's claimed invention. Particularly JP 08-241697 (complete English translation filed on 03/31/05) and JP-241698 (complete English translation filed on 03/31/05) fail to teach a plurality of lamp tubes "wherein one outside electrode is disposed at said at least one of said plurality of lamp tubes is electrically connected with another outside electrode disposed at an adjacent another of said plurality of lamp tubes" as claimed in independent claim 1; "one lamp tube ...and at least one bent portion,....one outside electrode.....of said at least one lamp tube is electrically connected with another of said at least one outside electrode disposed at an adjacent another of said plurality of substantially parallel line portions of said at least one lamp tube" as claimed in independent claim 4; "wherein said outside electrodes includes: first and second power supply electrodes; and first and second ground electrodes disposed between said first and second power electrodes; and wherein no power supply electrode is disposed between said first and second ground electrodes" as claimed in independent claim 6 and "a plurality of lamp tubes without inside electrodes and which are discharged by outside

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electrodes....wherein said outside electrode include at least two kinds of electrodes having different voltages applied thereto, a plurality of groups of electrodes are constructed so that electrodes in each group are arranged in a substantially line configuration with respect to a direction transverse to an extending direction of a respective one of said lamp tubes and electrically interconnected with an electrode of an adjacent lamp tube, each group of electrodes is arranged at a different position of said plurality of lamp tubes with respect to the extending direction of a respective one of said lamp tubes so that a same kind of said at least two kinds of electrodes is only arranged in the same line with respect to the transverse direction.” as claimed in independent claim 21.

Any comments considered necessary by applicant must be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee and, to avoid processing delays, should preferably accompany the issue fee. Such submissions should be clearly labeled “Comments on Statement of Reasons for Allowance.”

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Thomas M. Sember whose telephone number is 571-272-2381. The examiner can normally be reached on M-F 8 A.M- 5.30 p.m. first Fridays off.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner’s supervisor, Sandra O’Shea can be reached on 703-305-4939. The

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fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'T. M. Sember', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Thomas M Sember
Primary Examiner
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